



Welcome to the
OSSD at
West Chester
University!

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About West Chester University

- Founded in 1871 as an institute for teacher preparation
- Mascot: Rammy
- School Colors: **PURPLE** and **GOLD** PURPLE and GO
- Competes in NCAA Division II in 24 intercollegiate men's and women's sports
- 300+ student clubs and organizations
- WCU has 16 fraternities and 18 sororities
- 21 academic buildings
- 13 options for on-campus student housing



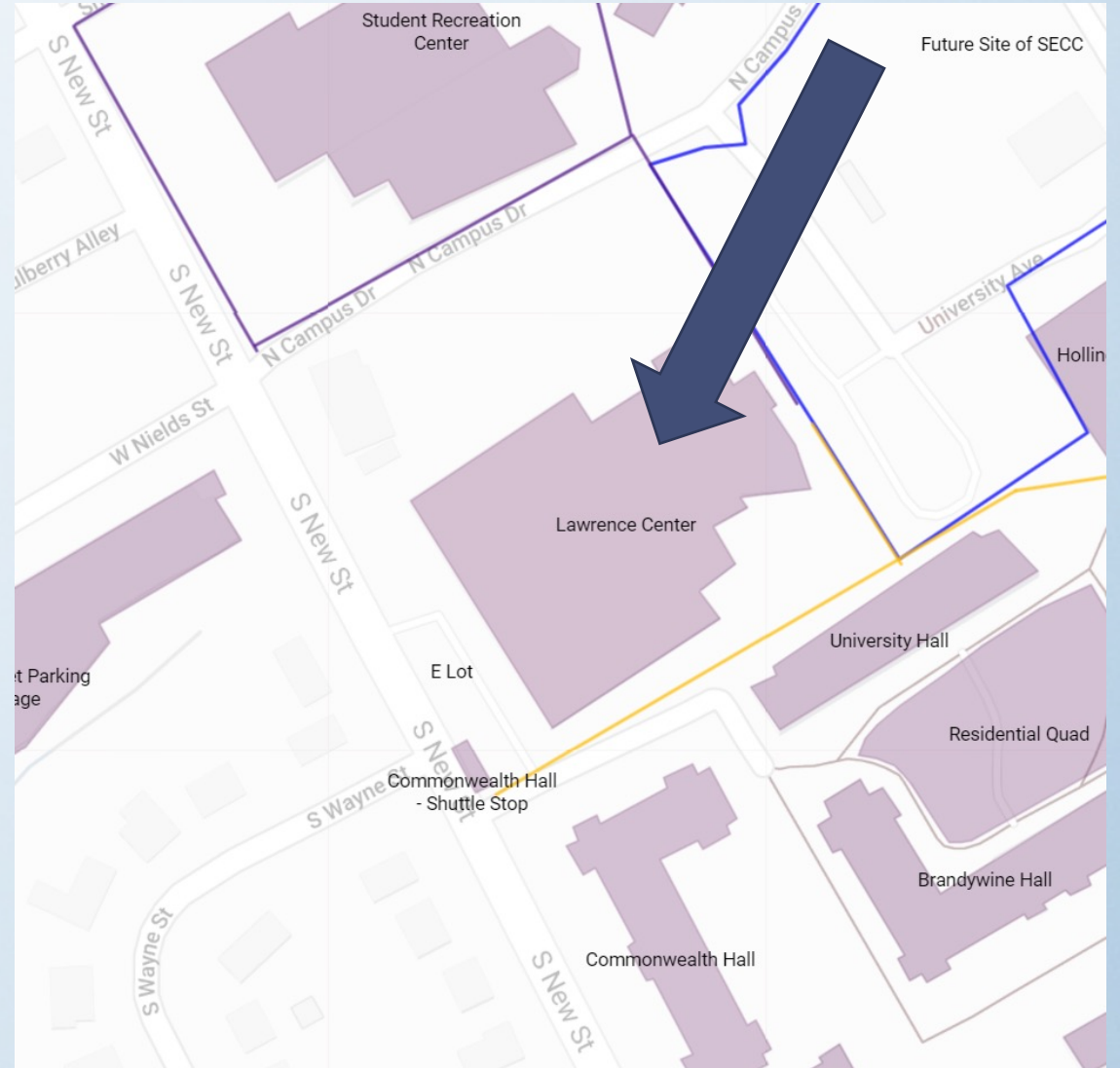
More about West Chester University

- WCU has 118 undergraduate programs and 80 graduate programs
- Undergraduate Student to Faculty Ratio 19:1
- Total Enrollment (2020/21 calendar year = 17,552 students
 - Undergraduate: 14,592
 - Graduate: 2,960
- Student Body Demographics: WCU students come from 29 different states and 74 different countries
 - 40% male, 60% female
- 92% of first-year students live in campus housing



About the Office of Services For Students with Disabilities (OSSD)

- Nicknamed OSSD
- On-campus office designed to assist students with various disabilities achieve success in college
 - Learning
 - Physical
 - Emotional
- Located in the Lawrence Center at 705 S. New Street, West Chester PA 19383



Differences Between High School and College Regarding Disabilities

- Topic
- High School
- College

Self-Advocacy	The school / classroom is primarily responsible for arranging accommodations	Student must self-identity to the college and are responsible for arranging accommodations
Parent Role	Parent has access to student records and can participate and advocate for student	Parent does not have access to records, and student must advocate for self
Instruction	Teachers may modify curriculum and pace of assignments	Professors are not required to modify assignments
Grades and Test	Plans may include testing format modifications and makeup tests are often available	Grading and format changes are generally not available, but accommodations on HOW test are given are available (example: extended time)

More Differences Between High School and College Regarding Disabilities

- Topic
- High School
- College

Study Responsibilities	Tutoring and study support may be a service, and your assignments may be structured by others	Students with disabilities must manage their own time and can seek out tutoring sources available to all students
Required Documentation	Individual Education Plan and/or 504 plan. School provides evaluation and is required to seek out and identity students with disabilities	High School Individual Education Plan and 504 Plan are not sufficient, student must self-identify and get evaluation at their own expensive
Applicable Laws	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (about Success)	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (about Access)

Resources Provided by the OSSD

Academic Coaching – specially trained graduate students work with OSSD-registered students to develop and enhance academic and life skills that affect their coursework and academic progress.

Test Proctoring Center – alternative testing site for students who receive testing accommodations

Mindfulness – helps students to incorporate healthy, mindful habits in their everyday lives through contemplative practice

More Resources at the OSSD

Audio Books – help provide audio versions of required readings and textbooks

E-text – an alternative to written text for students who need a combination of print and/or more interactive text

Reading Technology – programs which allow students to access e-text or online material

Notetaking Technology – SmartPen loaner program allows students to record lectures and upload notes to a computer for editing

Alternate Text – aids students with disabilities who have difficulty accessing traditional paperbound texts

Other Resources at West Chester University

- **SmartThinking** – free, online tutoring 24/7 remotely on a variety of topics, such as writing, math, and languages.
- **Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC)** – provides tutoring, success coaching and academic workshops
- **Counseling & Psychological Center** – offers individual consultations, group meetings, help with substance abuse, and more!
- **Academic Success Program** – special admissions program for students who do not meet current admissions criteria but who still show the potential to succeed in college

Self-Advocacy

- Defined as the action of representing oneself or one's views or interests
- Helps an individual:
 - Have more control over daily decisions
 - Properly make decisions
 - Empower oneself
 - Speak up for oneself
- For students with disabilities, self advocacy is **essential** to receiving accommodations and communicating with professors and classmates

Tips and Advice from Students

- Don't be afraid to put yourself out there and go to a new event
- Take classes that interest you
- Look for scholarships
- Take advantage of WCU resources
- Always ask questions
- Take your time!

More Tips and Advice from Students

- Form good relationships with your professors
- Utilize your professors' office hours
- Get a planner to keep yourself organized
- Always take notes
- Join clubs on campus and get involved
- Always look out for networking opportunities

Thank you for your
interest in the OSSD at
West Chester University

Contact us at ossd@wcupa.edu

